



Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program

Quarterly Newsletter

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Email hseep@dhs.gov with comments or questions.

June 2006, Issue 5

The Homeland Security Exercise and Evaluation Program (HSEEP) is a capabilities-based exercise program that provides a standardized methodology and language for the design, development, conduct, and evaluation of all exercises.

The purpose of HSEEP is to facilitate the creation of self-sustaining, capabilities-based exercise programs by providing tools and resources such as policy, guidance, training, technology, and direct support. This blended approach to HSEEP implementation increases regional, State, and local exercise expertise, while advancing a standardized means of assessing and improving preparedness across the Nation.

This quarterly newsletter was created to communicate new HSEEP initiatives, Volume revisions, and recent and upcoming events.

Note: This newsletter outlines new HSEEP-related initiatives and revisions of the Volumes; however, the fundamentals of the exercise planning and evaluation process and methodology are not being altered. Tools and resources are being implemented to streamline the exercise process from planning through evaluation. These tools and resources will incorporate new policies such as *Homeland Security Presidential Directives (HSPD) 5 and 8*, and ensure a common framework that all exercises, regardless of scenario or scope, can adopt.

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HSEEP Volume Revisions

HSEEP Volume I, II, and III

The HSEEP Volumes have been revised to incorporate updated policy and guidance, including the National Incident Management System (NIMS), and *National Preparedness Goal*. Specifically, the revised Volumes reflect the following changes:

- An explanation for how to incorporate capabilities-based planning into exercise program management, design, development, conduct, evaluation, and improvement planning is provided;
- Guidance on utilizing the *Target Capabilities List (TCL)* and *Universal Task List (UTL)* to plan and evaluate

exercises is included;

- References to Department of Homeland Security (DHS)/Office of Grants & Training (G&T)-specific doctrinal or grant related requirements, such as references to terrorism-only scenarios, have been eliminated; and
- The order of Volumes II and III have been reversed to follow the natural progression of exercise design, development, conduct, evaluation, and improvement planning.

HSEEP Volume I is an executive summary that provides an overview of HSEEP and describes how to manage an exercise program. It defines all seven exercise types and outlines the five phases of the HSEEP process. Volume II describes the exercise planning phases. The planning phase incorporates the eight steps of design and development from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) Emergency Management Institute (EMI) "Exercise Design" course (Independent Study-139). Volume III provides guidance on the exercise evaluation and improvement planning process.

Update: The revised versions of [HSEEP Volume I: HSEEP Overview and Exercise Program Management](#) and [HSEEP Volume II: Exercise Planning and Conduct](#) have been posted to the HSEEP website. The revised version of [HSEEP Volume III: Exercise Evaluation and Improvement Planning](#) has also recently been posted to gather feedback. To provide feedback on the Volumes, please complete the [corresponding surveys](#) on the website or send an email to hseep@dhs.gov. Please send comments by July 7th, 2006, for Volumes I and II, and July 21st, 2006, for Volume III.

HSEEP Volume IV Library

The HSEEP Volume IV Library allows users to search and sort sample documents, templates, and multimedia files in a more efficient manner. Individuals are able to view, download, and upload exercise planning and management documents. It has advanced search features and an intuitive table of contents navigation capability, for easier document access.

Update: The HSEEP Volume IV Library is available on the HSEEP website. To provide feedback, please complete the corresponding survey. Several example Situation Manuals and exercise presentations have been recently added, including scenarios for hurricanes, Tactical Interoperable Communications Plans, Cyber, Chlorine, and Improvised Explosive Devices.

Please note: Example scenario materials (e.g., SitMans, MSELs, etc.) are considered sensitive and may only be accessed through the library by those with a current G&T Secure Portal password.

HSEEP Volume V

HSEEP Volume V: Prevention Exercises provides guidance consistent with the HSEEP model to assist jurisdictions in designing and evaluating exercises that test prevention capabilities such as intelligence analysis and information sharing. This document provides guidance and a uniform approach to prevention exercise foundation, design, development, conduct, and evaluation.

Update: *HSEEP Volume V: Prevention Exercises* has been posted to the HSEEP website. To provide feedback on the Volume, please complete the corresponding surveys or send an email to hseep@dhs.gov. A pilot training course, modeled after the exercise process outlined in Volume V, was recently delivered to Federal, State, local, and private sector representatives. Feedback from the pilot course has been incorporated.

For more information regarding Volume V or the Terrorism Prevention Exercise Program (TPEP), please contact Jonathan Cleck, Program Manager, at jonathan.cleck@dhs.gov.

Exercise Evaluation Guides

The Exercise Evaluation Guides (EEGs) released through HSEEP will be the standard mechanism for exercise

evaluation. The EEGs are currently under subject matter expert (SME) revision to validate components of the *TCL* used to develop the guides. This will also ensure that the resulting After Action Reports and Improvement Plans (AARs/IPs) support the *National Preparedness Goal* requirement to consistently assess the Nation's preparedness.

The revised EEGs will accomplish the following:

- Provide for consistent exercise evaluation throughout the Nation
- Contribute to exercise AARs/IPs by providing a consistent feedback mechanism to participating organizations on their performance and promote lessons learned sharing
- Serve as a training aid and provide direct linkage to available training courses

In addition to the pre-identified tasks within the EEGs, organizations and jurisdictions are encouraged to tailor the EEG by incorporating additional tasks and/or measures specific to their plans, processes, and procedures.

An Exercise Evaluation Working Group was created to encourage a common exercise evaluation methodology and the use of common tools across Federal, State, local, and Tribal levels of government and the private sector. In addition, participants' sharing of lessons learned from other agencies and programs are being incorporated into the policy and guidance.

The Exercise Evaluation Working Group consists of representatives from Federal, State, and local organizations. For further information on the Working Group, please contact Kristin Wyckoff, Exercise Evaluation Program Manager, at hseep@dhs.gov.

Update: The third meeting of the Exercise Evaluation Working Group convened March 15th, 2006. The Working Group was presented with the revisions and updates to the EEG format, and discussed a revised AAR/IP template. An overview and update of HSEEP was provided, and the Interagency Corrective Action Program (CAP) and the IP Tracking and Analysis System prototype were discussed. The next Exercise Evaluation Working Group meeting is scheduled for summer 2006.

The revised EEG and AAR/IP templates were piloted during the North Carolina Pandemic CIPHER exercise held May 24-25, 2006 to validate initial draft EEG content and formats. Comments on the existing EEGs or suggestions for revisions are welcome. To provide feedback, please send an email to hseep@dhs.gov.

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HSEEP Initiatives

HSEEP Training Courses

The DHS Preparedness Directorate is coordinating with FEMA's EMI on all exercise training courses currently under development or revision. Coordination will ensure consistency among all exercise curriculums including Independent Study courses, the Master Exercise Practitioner Program (MEPP), State delivered ("G") courses, and the HSEEP Mobile Training Course, among others.

Independent Study-120 Course Revision - G&T continues to work with FEMA's EMI to incorporate the HSEEP guidance and methodology into EMI's "An Orientation to Community Disaster Exercises," Independent Study (IS)-120 (will be renamed to IS-120.A). IS-120 introduces individuals to the basics of exercise program management, design, development, conduct, evaluation, and improvement planning.

The course will also lay the foundation for future courses that will address further details of a comprehensive exercise program. The IS-120 course has been used as the prerequisite for the HSEEP Mobile Training Course

pilots and will continue to be the prerequisite to the Mobile Course after it is finalized and released.

Update: Beta testing of the IS-120 course has been completed and the on-line, interactive course will be placed on EMI's Virtual Campus by the end of July. Two versions (same content) of the course will be offered for both high and low bandwidth internet connections. Upon successful completion of the final course exam, EMI will mail students a course completion certificate.

HSEEP Mobile Training Course - The HSEEP Mobile Training Course is modular in structure and takes students through the full spectrum of exercise program management, design, development, conduct, evaluation, and improvement planning. It is intended for use by exercise program managers, planners, controllers, evaluators, and elected officials at the Federal, State, and local level.

The course is three days in length with a class size of approximately 50 students. Throughout the course, students are grouped into teams and complete 17 activities that apply the knowledge learned in the modules. It also covers new initiatives and updated policy including the HSEEP Toolkit, *TCL*, and the *UTL*.

The HSEEP Mobile Training Course will not replace current course offerings from DHS or EMI; rather, it is an intermediate-level course that walks the students through the entire HSEEP process.

Update: The sixth and final pilot of the HSEEP Mobile Training Course with Federal partners was completed on January 27th, 2006. Feedback from participants and SMEs was analyzed and incorporated for future courses.

The HSEEP Mobile Training Course was presented to the G&T Training Course Review Board in March. The Review Board judged the course for its instructional merit and suggested constructive changes. The course was ultimately approved by the G&T Training Course Review Board.

G&T is postponing the delivery of the final version of the course due to the necessity for G&T to refocus resources on two of the Secretary's current priorities that must be completed this summer. On May 11th, 2006, G&T disseminated Information Bulletin #206 (further explained below) which stated that there is a temporary suspension on direct support, to include support for the HSEEP Mobile Training Course. The course will be made available once this temporary suspension is lifted.

Once the suspension is lifted, requests for the course must be submitted through the State Administrative Agency's office. An HSEEP Mobile Training Course Application and Users' Handbook will be available on the HSEEP website and G&T Secure Portal shortly.

National Standard Exercise Curriculum **New**

The National Standard Exercise Curriculum (NSEC) is an effort currently underway to unify curriculum in exercise program management, design, development, conduct, evaluation, and improvement planning across the country. The initial goal for EMI and the DHS Preparedness Directorate is to align their respective curriculums with HSEEP for consistency. The NSEC strategy involves providing guidance to Federal, State, and local jurisdictions and the private sector concerning exercise training and reinforcement. The NSEC Working Group recently presented a workshop at EMI's National Training and Exercise Conference in May and received comments and valuable suggestions from the participants.

Major objectives of the curriculum development process include the following:

- Establish planning guidance to align coursework into a national standardized exercise curriculum
- Ensure consistency across all exercise training curricula in accordance with NIMS and the *National Preparedness Goal*
- Shape future efforts in exercise training and course development
- Provide a clear path for students on how to become an exercise beginner, intermediate, and ultimately a master exercise practitioner
- Integrate HSEEP into the MEPP

HSEEP Toolkit

The HSEEP Toolkit is a suite of web-based applications that walks users through design, development, conduct, evaluation, and improvement planning of exercises. It also provides guidance, timelines, and associated sample documentation from the HSEEP Volumes.

Update: G&T recently completed beta testing for the HSEEP Toolkit. The final version of the Toolkit will be released in summer 2006 and will be accessible through the HSEEP website. New content and functionality have been added over the past few months including a more user-friendly layout, revised HSEEP Volume IV documents, and a more detailed, guided introduction.

Individuals who would like to access the current version of the Toolkit must be members of the G&T Secure Portal. Members of the G&T Secure Portal can gain access to the "Toolkit plug-in" by sending a request to hseep@dhs.gov. If you are not currently a member of the Secure Portal, send an email to askcsid@dhs.gov requesting access to the "HSEEP Organization" and "Toolkit plug-in."

Please note: Access to the Toolkit will be managed differently after it is released. More information regarding this revised process will be available on the HSEEP homepage at that time. The revised access process will be disseminated to current members of the G&T Secure Portal.

HSEEP Website

The HSEEP website serves as the central interface and destination for individuals inquiring about new HSEEP initiatives, communications, related links, tools, and applications. The HSEEP website can be accessed by visiting hseep.dhs.gov.

Update: Several new pages have been created within the site including the "HSEEP Laboratory," a page that contains all of the latest tools and resources currently under beta testing. Please visit the "HSEEP Laboratory" by clicking on any link in the "What's New" section of the homepage.

From the "HSEEP Laboratory," users can test and review all of the revised or recently developed tools and resources and provide feedback. Some of the tools require users to log in to the G&T Secure Portal.

An Exercise Program Management and Planning Lessons Learned and Good Stories page has also been created and is available from the homepage. This page highlights the exercise lessons learned and good stories also available on llis.gov.

The "About HSEEP" page, linked from the homepage, will be completed by the end of June. This page will provide visitors with an overview of HSEEP and answers to frequently asked questions (FAQs).

The look of the website will change shortly. The layout and color scheme will be altered, but the content will not change. A portion of the website is still under construction and will be available soon. To provide feedback on the HSEEP website, please send an email to hseep@dhs.gov. This site will not replace existing sites or portals.

Exercise Program Management and Planning Lessons Learned

The National Exercise Program (NEP) and *Lessons Learned Information Sharing (LLIS)* continue to work together to distribute exercise program management and planning lessons learned to the homeland security community. This research initiative will continue to produce a wide array of new content on issues including the following:

- Managing and maintaining an effective exercise program (e.g. multi-year exercise planning, scheduling, and monitoring)
- Designing and developing exercises (e.g., recruiting actor volunteers, coordinating exercise logistics, handling media-related issues, forming a planning team)
- Coordinating training courses with exercises
- Evaluating exercises and tracking improvements

Update: Over the past few months, llis.gov has posted nine exercise program management and planning Lessons Learned and one Good Story including the following:

- [Exercise Design: Scheduling Evaluation Meetings between Exercise Play Sessions](#)
- [Exercise Planning: Pre-Designating Backup Incident Commanders and Section Chiefs](#)
- [Exercise Conduct: Promoting Participant Safety during a Full-Scale Exercise](#)
- [Exercise Conduct: Recruiting Full-Scale Exercise Volunteers](#)
- [Exercise Conduct: Using Moulage during a Full Scale Exercise](#)
- [Volunteer Coordination: Creating a Staging Area for Full-Scale Exercise Participants](#)
- [Volusia County, Florida Ocean Mass Casualty Exercise](#)
- [Volunteer Coordination: Utilizing Two Shifts of Volunteers during Lengthy Full-Scale Exercises](#)
- [Exercise Conduct: Preparing Volunteers for their Exercise Roles](#)
- [Exercise Design: Allowing Sufficient Time for Exercise Participants to Establish an Initial Incident Command](#)

The LLIS research team continues to research and draft new Lessons Learned and Good Story documents. This content will be posted on the llis.gov exercise pages as it is completed.

The LLIS team is interested in continuing to develop contacts with individuals who have exercise subject matter expertise. To be included in the research process, please send an email to exercises@llis.dhs.gov.

National Exercise Schedule Working Group

The National Exercise Schedule (NEXS) is a compilation of all National-level, Federal, State, and local exercises. The NEXS provides basic information on each planned exercise including the exercise name, location, date, major participants, and points-of-contact. The NEXS also serves as a management tool and reference document for exercise planning and enables visibility of exercises to planners and leadership.

The NEXS Working Group was formed to discuss the fundamentals of the exercise scheduling process and the key characteristics of a collaborative scheduling system. The goal of the Working Group was to develop a streamlined and more user-friendly web-based scheduling system.

Update: The NEXS Working Group met in December 2005. Feedback and consensus from Federal, State, and local exercise scheduling representatives and SMEs was obtained for scheduling requirements and processes, achieving consensus on previous working group meeting issues, determining necessary reporting functions, and agreement on notification processes for coordination and collaboration efforts.

The NEXS Working Group was expanded from its initial DHS intra-agency and State composition to include inter-agency partners. The fourth meeting was held on February 14th, 2006 to review the progress of the previous meetings and to examine the strategy for the rollout and implementation of a new and improved NEXS management tool.

Working Group members were invited to beta test the tool and to provide input into its development. This initial group was expanded to include all exercise schedulers who participate in the current Centralized Scheduling Information System (CSIS) on the G&T Secure Portal.

The results of the working group analysis and feedback, as well as the feedback from the exercise scheduling

community, helped shape and formalize scheduling requirements and provided direction for the evolution of an enhanced NEXS tool that is integrated into the exercise lifecycle. It is anticipated that the new NEXS tool will be deployed in late July 2006.

The next annual NEXS Conference, the national conference for the synchronization of exercises, will be held on June 26th, 2006. For further information on the NEXS Working Group and the development of the new NEXS tool, please contact Bill Schwinn, the NEXS Program Manager, at nexs@dhs.gov.

Multi-year Training and Exercise Plan

G&T has developed a Multi-year Training and Exercise Plan template to replace the current Multi-year Exercise Plan template. This revised template promotes strategic scheduling of training and exercises to provide targeted opportunities to apply knowledge gained from training courses to existing and future exercises.

The Multi-year Training and Exercise Plan allows program managers to identify their training and exercise priorities based on Homeland Security Strategies, previous year's IPs, and the national priorities from the National Preparedness Goal. The plan also identifies the capabilities associated with the entity's priorities.

Training will be based on the identified capabilities and the exercises will validate those capabilities. The training courses and exercises will be graphically depicted on a multi-year schedule. The schedule identifies high-level scheduling information such as training area focus, type of exercise, scenario category, and estimated conduct dates by quarter.

Update: The Multi-year Training and Exercise Plan template continues to be updated to reflect the capabilities-based planning approach. The revised Multi-year Training and Exercise Plan outlines the priorities a State has established in its Homeland Security Strategy, as based on the National Priorities defined by DHS; a State Capabilities Assessment; and previous AARs/IPs.

Each priority is connected to a specific IP effort and an associated target capability. This facilitates accomplishing the priority by specifying the steps required for fulfillment. The training and exercise schedule graphically incorporates and organizes the training and exercise events scheduled to address the priorities.

The schedule is color-coded by priority and presents a multi-year outlook for task and priority achievement. As training and exercises are completed, the document can be annually updated, modified, and revised to reflect changes to the priorities and new capabilities that need to be assessed.

The Multi-year Training and Exercise Plan is produced through the work completed at the Training and Exercise Plan Workshop (T&EPW). The workshop focuses on discussion of capabilities-based planning, overview of the National Priorities, review of the State or jurisdiction priorities, and analysis of previous training and exercises. After this information is synthesized, participants develop the plan and schedule for their State or jurisdiction.

A pilot T&EPW was conducted in Mississippi on February 7th, 2006. Revisions were made based on the feedback received at this pilot.

Individuals interested in using the Multi-year Training and Exercise Plan are encouraged to visit the HSEEP website, by clicking on the corresponding link in the 'What's New' section. Users can provide feedback by completing the corresponding survey on the website.

Recent and Upcoming Events

Hurricane Preparedness Exercises **New**

The devastation caused by Hurricanes Katrina, Rita, and Wilma resulted in a major dislocation of citizens and destruction of critical infrastructure. These consequences have initiated a series of plan, policy, and procedural revisions at all levels of government to be completed by June 1st, 2006. In support of this initiative, and at the direction of the Secretary, DHS has planned several exercise activities designed to assist Federal agencies, States, and Territories with their preparations for the 2006 hurricane season. An ambitious timeline has been developed to ensure the full benefits from the efforts are realized before the start of the upcoming hurricane season.

DHS/G&T, in coordination with FEMA, is spearheading the Hurricane Preparedness Exercises (HPEs). This directive includes five regional tabletop exercises (TTXs), encompassing all of the Gulf Coast and Eastern Seaboard States and Territories, organized by FEMA regions. Participation includes appropriate Federal, State, Territory, local, and Tribal representatives, in addition to nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and our partners in the private sector.

This regional construct allows States and Territories to enhance regional collaboration and communication capabilities. The exercises are building on the extracted lessons learned and best practices from a recent analysis of the previous year's hurricane related AARs. This effort also provides a forum to communicate the revised coordination and response plans that address challenges that could arise if another catastrophic storm strikes.

Participation in the exercises is intended to provide the following:

- A forum for senior Federal policy makers to answer questions
- An opportunity to reinforce NIMS concepts and principles
- An updated contact list consisting of the main points of contact for catastrophic real world events from the participating States and Territories, to be distributed to all Federal participants
- An opportunity for Federal agencies to better understand State and Territory needs and expectations before, during, and after a catastrophic natural disaster

The dates and locations for the TTXs are as follows:

- Region I and Region II (NY, NJ): June 20-22 in New London, CT
- Region II (PR, USVI): June 5-6 in San Juan, PR (completed)
- Region III: May 3-5 in Philadelphia, PA (completed)
- Region IV: May 31-June 2 in Atlanta, GA (completed)
- Region VI: May 17-19 in New Orleans, LA (completed)

In addition to the regional HPEs, G&T supported several seminars, workshops, and TTXs for senior Federal, State, and local officials including:

- Louisiana Governor Mobile Education Team Session: May 16 in New Orleans, LA
- Federal and Louisiana Evacuation Planning Workshop: May 30 in Baton Rouge, LA
- Catastrophic Assessment Task Force (CATF) Cabinet-level Exercise: May 24
- FEMA CONOP Workshop and TTX: June 8 and 16

The lessons learned from these exercises can be found at [llis.gov](https://www.dhs.gov).

Tactical Interoperable Communication Validation Exercises **New**

Information Bulletin #192 required Urban Area Security Initiative (UASI)-designated Urban Areas and other State-designated metropolitan areas (hereafter “sites”) to develop and test their Tactical Interoperable Communications Plan (TICP) with a full-scale exercise (FSE). Information Bulletin #205 stated that the deadline for validating the TICP through an FSE (previously established as May 2007 in the Fiscal Year [FY] 2005 Homeland Security Grant Program Guidance) had been accelerated.

At the Secretary’s direction, FSEs must now be conducted by September 30th, 2006. The AARs/IPs must be submitted to G&T by December 1st, 2006, and the final validation process must be completed by December 31st, 2006. Over the next five months, G&T will assist the 76 sites in successfully completing the validation requirement within the accelerated timeline.

G&T held the Tactical Interoperable Communications Conference on May 8-9 to orient site representatives to the exercise validation process and the abridged timeframe to complete the requirement.

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Announcements

Temporary Suspension of Direct Support **New**

G&T disseminated Information Bulletin #206 on May 11th, 2006. Information Bulletin #206 served to inform stakeholders of the temporary suspension of G&T direct support. The suspension will likely extend into the fall and was prompted by the need for G&T to realign resources and Exercise Support Teams in order to successfully complete two of the Secretary’s current priorities (outlined above). Resources must be focused on the Hurricane Preparedness Exercises and TICP exercises in order to complete both priority initiatives within the abridged planning timelines.

Jurisdictions that have already been approved for direct support will not be affected by this suspension; the planning and execution of these exercises will continue as scheduled.

Requests for direct support submitted after dissemination of Information Bulletin #206 will be held until further notice, reviewed in the order in which they are received, and approved based on the availability of resources. This includes requests for the following:

- HSEEP Mobile Training Course
- Direct Support Exercises (other than TICP FSEs)
- Training and Exercise Plan Workshops

The direct support program will resume as soon as resources allow. In the interim, please direct questions to your G&T Exercise Manager or email questions to hseep@dhs.gov.

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HSEEP Exercise and Program Management Highlights

"Exercise Conduct: Promoting Safety during a Full-Scale Exercise" **New**

In November 2005, *LLIS* published a Lesson Learned entitled, "Exercise Conduct: Promoting Participant Safety during a Full-Scale Exercise." Drawn from a June 2005 ocean mass casualty exercise in Volusia County, Florida, the document focuses on the importance of providing for the health and safety of exercise volunteers. The document calls specifically for the inclusion of a safety officer in any large-scale exercise management team.

With over 100 volunteer "victims" participating on a summer afternoon, exercise planners recognized that participants might be exposed to extreme temperatures for long periods of time. This realization prompted concerns about dehydration and/or sunburn. Volusia County Emergency Management (VCEM) therefore appointed an exercise safety officer who worked closely with the incident safety officer to account for the welfare of the exercise participants, volunteers, and staff.

Through the exercise safety officer, VCEM provided bottled water and sports drinks, shaded areas at the participant staging area and the exercise site, and contracted the Emergency Medical Foundation to provide medical care at the site. VCEM thus effectively combined these measures to ensure that the exercise's participants remained safe and healthy.

For more information about this story and others, please visit llis.gov.

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Links

Links to the G&T Secure Portal will require a login.

- To learn more about HSEEP policy and guidance, please see [HSEEP Volumes I-IV](#).
- [HSPD-8 documents](#) include the full versions of the *UTL* and *TCL*, among others.
- To apply for G&T direct support, use the [Direct Support Application and Users' Handbook](#).
- Visit the [HSEEP Laboratory](#) to explore all of the new HSEEP tools and resources.
- All archived [HSEEP Newsletters](#) are stored on the G&T Secure Portal and are available for viewing.
- The comprehensive [National Exercise Schedule](#) is offered in three formats.

To provide feedback on the HSEEP newsletter or share an exercise or program management story to be used in a future issue, please send an email to hseep@dhs.gov.